

September 13, 1991

TO: Emily Barr
FROM: Janet Covington
RE: QUARTERLY SUMMARY

The overriding issues that either stayed on - or were moved to the front burner during the last three months are:

- EDUCATION (at elementary, secondary and post-secondary level):

A. ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY:

By the time the expected non-renewal of Baltimore City School's controversial Superintendent Richard Hunter became official, a search for his replacement was in the final stages. Shortly after Hunter's contract was not renewed, Dr. Walter Amprey was named as the new Superintendent, but it was not absolute. In an unprecedented move, the School Board also named two deputies - two educators who had also been candidates for the top job. Superintendent Amprey accepted having Dr. Lillian Gonzales and Dr. Patsy Blackshear as his deputies. Concern for the quality of education in Baltimore City remains a top priority. The smoldering question now is: "Is Amprey a man of vision - Will the triumvirate work?" As we have in the past, Channel 2 will continue to monitor the progress - or lack of same in the Baltimore City School System. We will continue to consult with the Metropolitan Education Coalition, the G.B.C., the Abell Foundation, the Urban League, the Urban Services Agency, and the PTA in order to get a broad-based reaction to attempts to turn education around in the City.

Other important education stories in the State that affect all L.E.A.'s broke at the end of the school year. The State Board of Education announced new graduation requirements and the issuance of report cards for all schools. A new Superintendent at the State level was named.

B. HIGHER EDUCATION:

The Commission on Higher Education fielded for discussion plans for mergers between several different state colleges and universities. Debate began immediately and will continue during the months ahead. Doctors Calvin Burnett and Earl Richardson, Presidents of two separate black institutions of higher learning (Coppin State College and Morgan University respectively), vehemently oppose combining the two schools. This proposal and others bear further exploration and must be watched carefully in the months ahead. Clearly higher

Federal Communications Commission

Docket No. 93-94 Exhibit No. 15

Presented by FOUR JACKS

Identified ✓

Disposition

Received ✓

Rejected

Reporter M. K. FUEISHMAN

Date 11/08/93

education has to be revamped in the State, but the form restructuring takes is a legitimate matter of debate.

One immediate response to the budget constraints being felt at all State schools was an increase in tuition costs. Some institutions cancelled certain courses as a revenue saving tactic.

- BUDGETS at the state and local levels and the resulting cutbacks:

A. STATE:

In spite of a diversified economy, Maryland was hit hard by the recession, and State revenues fell far short of what was expected. Additionally, State legislators had preferred holding fast to a "no new taxes" position rather than embrace a special commission's comprehensive, widely praised tax restructuring plan. When the new State fiscal year began July 1, most State agencies were under orders to cut their already reduced budgets by 15% and to impose hiring freezes. No cost saving measures imposed by the Governor generated more anger than changing the State employee work week from 37-1/2 to 40 hours. The Governor and Hilda Ford, head of personnel for the State, said this action would prevent layoffs. Unions representing State workers led employee opposition, but to no avail. Morale remains affected by the decision, however.

B. LOCAL:

Because of the shortfall in State revenues, Counties received less money from the State. Because of this, the economic downturn, and the "no new taxes" mentality (that helped put the county executives and councilpersons in office), all Central Maryland subdivisions had to make critical budget decisions that have impacted upon the delivery of services and delayed the implementation of some programs previously scheduled for start-up. Roger Hayden, Baltimore County Executive, remains firm in his tax position, but Charles Ecker of Howard County is exploring new tax initiatives. Robert Neall of Anne Arundel County has introduced austerity measures and spent so much time on fiscal matters that some have criticized his lack of vision for the future.

- BALTIMORE CITY MAYORAL/CITY COUNCIL ELECTION and the lackluster to no campaigns:

The incumbent Mayor, Kurt Schmoke, found excuses not to engage in a public, community-based debate with his two principal challengers.

While this was good political strategy for the Mayor (as noted by his campaign manager Larry Gibson), it had a dampening affect on voter interest in the Primary. Channel 2 efforts in partnership with the League of Women Voters to schedule debate for television also failed.

Redrawn Councilmanic lines resulted in candidate activity on the part of those seeking City Council seats - particularly in the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Districts. The most interesting - if still only mildly exciting - contest was for Comptroller, since the ailing incumbent chose not to run again - and since two of those aspiring to the job gave up Council seats in order to run.

The alarming sidebar to the Councilmanic contests was race clearly became an issue in many districts - particularly where the redrawn lines threatened the incumbents.

- REDISTRICTING at the Congressional level and the outrageous gerrimandering designed to protect the political futures of the Democratic incumbents:

new Congressional
The Governor's Advisory Committee on Redistricting presented their recommendations for Maryland's districts. Everyone wondered if members of the Committee had been sleeping with their eyes open when public hearings had been held statewide throughout late spring and early summer. The redrawn map Mitchell, Miller and other members of the Commission unveiled was one of the most outrageous examples of gerrymandering imaginable. As a result of the public outcry statewide (Representatives Bentley and Cardin were particularly vocal), Committee members are making changes. Several Senators are also drafting alternate plans to be ready when the General Assembly convenes for a special session in late September called for the purpose of approving new district lines before the March '92 Primary in Maryland.

- STREET CRIME AND INCARCERATION: The escalation of crime was underscored by the deaths of two children - one six - one three, caught in crossfire (in two separate street shooting incidents). Incarceration moved to the headlines when the State took over the operation of the Baltimore City Jail on July 1 and subsequently discovered almost 100 inmates had been held for months - several for a couple of years without a trial.

Incidents of violent crime in the City increased, and so did the level of fear among residents. While no section is immune, most murders and assaults occurred in black neighborhoods. Bullets fired in street crimes even went through open windows, injuring those who stayed inside because they thought they would be safe. Rev. Willie Ray and other ministers organized rallies and marches urging citizens to take back their neighborhoods, and to report to the police drug dealing or other suspicious behavior they witnessed.

Police Commissioner Woods increased foot patrolmen in a number of high risk neighborhoods. Mayor Schmoke continues to point out the correlation between joblessness and crime and illicit drugs and how they threaten the future viability of the City.

The long lobbied for takeover of the City Jail by the State Department of Corrections and Public Safety became official July 1st. Randy Cochran, the new Warden and Patrick Conroy, the Facility Coordinator, had been prioritizing the long list of improvements needed and establishing a timetable even before they assumed their new duties. When they actually came aboard and started the task of updating the record keeping and prisoner tracking procedures, they found men had been kept way beyond the legal limit for having a trial. There are other problem areas in the jail that need attention ASAP. The station must continue to monitor progress at the institution. Watchdogging by the press has proved to be a valuable tool in prodding the Department of Safety and Public Policy.